

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Julia Butler Hansen

*Refuge for the Columbian
White-tailed Deer*

Wildlife Drive





4

Steamboat Slough

Steamboat Slough Rd

Brooks Slough Rd.

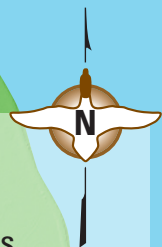
Columbia River

White-tail Trail (1.8 miles round-trip)
Open All Year

Center Road Trail (5 miles round-trip)
Open June - September

Washington
Oregon

4



Headquarters



Wildlife Drive Stops



Julia Butler Hanson Refuge



8



7



6



5



4



3



2



1





Columbian white-tailed deer. Photo Jake Bonello USFWS



At Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer, you don't have to leave your car to view wildlife.



The White-tail Wildlife Drive is open year-round. Want to get out and stretch your legs? You can travel by foot or bicycle on this road, too!



The road—which is a levee preventing the Columbia from flooding the refuge during high tide—winds past many different refuge habitats, from riparian forest to grasslands and wetlands to the Columbia River estuary.



Stop #1: Welcome to the Refuge!



Established in 1971 to aid in the recovery of a rare subspecies of white-tailed deer, Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer encompasses more than 6,000 acres of managed grasslands, wetlands, and forests along the Columbia River in Oregon and Washington.



The diverse habitats found at the refuge are managed primarily for the benefit of these deer; the maintenance yard you see houses equipment used by refuge staff to mow fields, maintain water-control structures, and perform other necessary work.



Did you know?



Julia Butler Hansen (1907-1988) was the daughter of a pioneer family that settled in Cathlamet, Washington. A lifelong public servant, Hansen worked with federal natural resource agencies, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to protect our nation's natural resources.

Stop #2: The Namesake Deer



Columbian white-tailed deer (CWTD) are the only subspecies of white-tailed deer found west of the Cascades. Formerly abundant, by the 1930s these small deer were believed to be extinct. However, remnant populations were discovered here and near Roseburg, Oregon. In 1968, they were added to the federal Endangered Species List.

As you tour the refuge, keep your eyes open for these quiet, secretive deer!

CWTD Facts



Columbian white-tailed deer. Photo Jonathon Heale

Population increased from 300-400 deer in 1972 to 1,200 currently

- The CWTD breeding season, or "rut" is in late fall. Doe's deliver 1-2 fawns in May or June
- Refuges comprise 20% of range and support 40% of population
- Downlisted from endangered to threatened in 2016
- The average lifespan of CWTD is 5-7 years, but some have lived up to 20 years

Stop #3: Riparian Restoration



The matrix of riparian forest and shrubs adjacent to grasslands seen here are essential habitat for deer, which forage on the abundant browse and take cover beneath the trees.

The forest comprises a mix of black cottonwood, Sitka spruce, western red cedar and bigleaf maple, combined with an understory of shrubs such as snowberry, dogwood, vine maple and willow. Scattered openings in the overstory permit light to reach the forest floor, supporting understory growth.



Red osier dogwood

Restoration of native riparian forest began with the establishment of the refuge and continues today.

Stop #4: Floodplain Habitat



This refuge contains a variety of wetland habitat types, including tidal swamps, freshwater marshes and sloughs, and flooded woodlands.

Marsh plants provide food for thousands of migratory ducks and geese, which in turn attract bald eagles and peregrine falcons. Water draining from the marshes carries nutrients into the Columbia River, nourishing organisms of the estuary. Freshwater marshes provide ideal breeding habitat for amphibians such as long-toed salamanders, red-legged frogs, and Pacific tree frogs.



Look for great blue herons stalking these wetland areas for prey! Photo: USFWS

Stop #5: Duck Lake

White-tail Wildlife Drive



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The open waters of Duck Lake and the Columbia River in the distance are home to wintering waterfowl including scaup, green-winged teal, ring-necked ducks, and small groups of swans. During summer, check the skies for osprey, American white pelicans, and swallows.

If you look at the nearby slough, you'll notice what's called a water-control structure. The hydrology of the lower Columbia River and its estuary is influenced by daily tidal fluctuations. Refuge staff use water-control structures to manage water levels in different parts of the refuge, flooding some areas and draining others to maintain habitat.

Keep an eye out for wood ducks in the quiet waters of Duck Lake! Photo: Peter Pearsall



Stop #6: Grazing the Refuge

White-tail Wildlife Drive



6

Notice the mowed fields here. Grassland management is a major activity at the refuge. Cattle grazing, mowing, and seeding are used to maintain about 700 acres in short, actively growing, nutritious grasses and clover that provide high-quality forage for CWTB, Canada geese, and cackling geese.

While the grasslands are managed to benefit CWTB, other wildlife also utilize them. Townsend's voles flourish in the grass, and their presence attracts predators such as northern harriers, great horned owls, barn owls, long-tailed weasels, and garter snakes.

This is also a good place to see Roosevelt elk, the largest of the four North American elk subspecies.



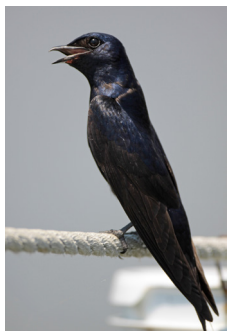
*Bull Roosevelt elk
Photo: Kirt Edblom*

Stop #7: White-tail Trail



This is a good place to get out and stretch your legs. The 1.8-mile White-tail Trail is open year-round and takes you past White-tail Slough, a sheltered body of water alongside the Columbia River. In the fields that parallel the river, look for purple martins near the nesting gourds.

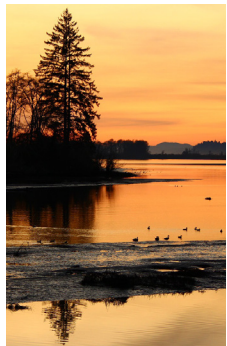
Purple martin facts:



Male purple martin
Photo: Matt Tillett

- Largest North American swallow, among the largest in the world
- A secondary-cavity nester, dependent on previously excavated recesses (or artificial structures) to breed
- Migrates from North American breeding grounds to Mexico, Central America and upper South America in winter
- Hunts insects at higher altitude than other swallows, usually 150-300 feet up

Steamboat Slough Restoration



Steamboat Slough
Photo: Jonathon Heale

Also visible from the trail is the Steamboat Slough Restoration Project, which restored 68 acres of historic tidal floodplain. Benefiting many species, this project involved:

- Providing foraging and rearing habitat for threatened and endangered salmonids in the Columbia River
- Allowing several waterfowl species to utilize the tidal wetland areas of the site for foraging and nesting
- Creating a setback levee to protect habitat for CWTD, allowing pasture grasses to grow

Stop #8: The Mighty Columbia



The wide expanse of water you see here is the Columbia River Estuary, terminus of the largest river in the Pacific Northwest. This estuary provides habitat for a variety of freshwater and marine fish species, including chinook, coho, and chum salmon; steelhead trout; green sturgeon, and many others.

Rafts of wintering diving ducks and loons are a common sight on the Columbia, along with bald eagles, river otters, and the occasional harbor seal or California sea lion. During summer months, search the skies for osprey, Caspian terns, white pelicans, and swallows.

Looking west, you can see Tenasillahe Island, part of the Refuge and habitat for another herd of around 200 CWTD. Visitors can access the island by boat and hike the 6.5-mile Tenasillahe Trail.

Thank you for visiting Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer!



Green-winged teal

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White-tailed Deer
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available in an alternative format
upon request.**

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